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PREPARATIONS FOR THE FOURTH WORLD CONFERENCE ON WOMEN: ACTION FOR EQUALITY, DEVELOPMENT AND PEACE

Draft Platform for Action

Report of the Secretary-General

1. In its resolution 37/7, the Commission on the Status of Women requested the Secretary-General to prepare, and to present to the Commission at its thirty-eighth session, a draft of the Platform for Action, following the structure and guidelines set out in the annex to the resolution and in the results of the meeting of the Inter-sessional Working Group of the Commission. The Commission emphasized that the Platform for Action should be concise and accessible and should accelerate, through concerted and intensive action in the coming years, the implementation of the Nairobi Forward-looking Strategies for the Advancement of Women in critical areas so that equality becomes a reality by the twenty-first century.

2. The Inter-sessional Working Group of the Commission met from 10 to 14 January 1994. The Working Group discussed the draft structure and a number of suggestions for improvement were made.

3. As requested, a first draft of the Platform for Action has been prepared (see annex). It is based generally on the structure set out in the annex to resolution 37/7, but includes a new section on the global framework for the Platform for Action, as was agreed to by the Working Group. In addition, the Working Group suggested adding the following areas as critical areas of concern: (a) insufficient use of mass media to promote women's positive contributions to society and (b) lack of adequate recognition and support for women's contribution to managing natural resources and safeguarding the environment.

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* E/CN.6/1994/1.

4. The current draft provides narratives for the sections on statement of mission, the global framework and critical areas of concern on the basis of the comments made by Governments during the meeting of the Working Group, contributions from organizations of the United Nations system, results of seminars and workshops on priority themes presented to the Commission since 1987, the preliminary results of the 1994 World Survey on the Role of Women in Development and initial thinking about the second review and appraisal of the Nairobi Forward-looking Strategies.

5. The draft provides an approach to elaborating strategic objectives and the action to be taken to achieve them. It is proposed that a further draft of the Platform for Action be elaborated based on the deliberations of the Commission at its thirty-eighth session, the results of the regional preparatory conferences, additional technical meetings (particularly in terms of the priority themes for the thirty-ninth session of the Commission) and an expert group meeting to be held in late 1994.

6. With regard to institutional and financial arrangements, the draft proposes a general approach which should be further elaborated over the next year.

Annex

DRAFT PLATFORM FOR ACTION

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I. STATEMENT OF MISSION

1. The Platform for Action aims to accelerate the removal of the remaining obstacles to women's full and equal participation in all spheres of life, including economic and political decision-making; to protect women's human rights throughout the life cycle, and to mainstream women in all areas of sustainable development so that men and women can work together for equality, development and peace. For this purpose, the international community, Governments, non-governmental organizations and the private sector are called upon to undertake strategic action to implement the Nairobi Forward-looking Strategies for the Advancement of Women in critical areas of concern.

II. GLOBAL FRAMEWORK

2. Since the adoption of the Nairobi Forward-looking Strategies for the Advancement of Women, in 1985, the world has been experiencing a global process of restructuring of political, economic, social and cultural relationships. This restructuring process has had a profound impact, both positive and negative, on women, and forms the backdrop for this Platform for Action.

3. Changes in political relationships have reduced the threat of global conflict and increased the importance of multilateral solutions to political problems. While the threat of global conflict has been reduced, a resurgence of nationalism and ethnic conflict have threatened the peace in many areas. They have also led to the expansion of the role of the United Nations in humanitarian assistance and peace-keeping.

4. The move towards democratization has been coupled with a renewed emphasis on the implementation of universal human rights. The recognition by the World Conference on Human Rights that the human rights of women are an inalienable, integral and indivisible part of universal human rights has meant that the full and equal participation of women in political, civil, economic, social and cultural life, at the national, regional and international levels, and the eradication of all forms of discrimination on grounds of sex are priority objectives of the international community. However, much remains to be done nationally and internationally to monitor and enforce women's human rights.

5. Economic relationships are also changing. The prolonged global economic recession has led to a restructuring of the economic relationships between countries and, in some regions, a decline in national as well as personal income and well-being. It has been accompanied by a growing reliance on market economies. The role of transnational corporations has increased. New areas of economic growth have emerged, especially in areas related to new technologies in information, health and related services. Global patterns of employment have been changing and women have begun to form the labour force in new growth sectors in all regions. At the same time, the capacity to provide services and make long-term investments through the public sector has been reduced, and poverty, both absolute and relative, has increased, accompanied by widespread migration of both women and men in search of employment.

6. Evidence of accelerating depletion of natural resources and other environmental problems has resulted in a global consensus on the need to see development in terms of sustainability over the long term. The United Nations Conference on Environment and Development identified women as key actors in the management and protection of natural resources, particularly in rural areas.

7. There has been renewed attention to human development seen in terms of the life cycle of the individual, progressing from childhood and youth through old age, and people's needs at different stages should be taken into account in policies and planning. There is a recognition that the generations are interdependent, that the youth of today will be the ageing of tomorrow and that the older generation transmits enduring values to the new generation.

8. As societies are being transformed, so too are the relationships between women and men. Differences between women's and men's achievements and participation are recognized as the result of socially constructed gender roles rather than biological differences. The sexual division of labour between productive roles and reproductive roles has become increasingly blurred as women have entered the workplace in growing numbers and their productive contribution in other spheres has received greater recognition, and as men have taken greater responsibility for domestic tasks, including the care of children. A focus on gender roles rather than on women alone is needed to emphasize the evolving partnership between men and women in a changing world.

9. Notably, despite common problems, the world is not homogeneous, and there are regional and national differences. But these differences are often a matter of degree rather than essence, a matter of resources and capacity available for solution rather than characteristic of the problems to be solved. Women are not a homogeneous group and there are differences among women with different life experiences. Young women, ageing women, disabled, migrant, refugee or displaced women all have special concerns. However, they also share many of the same concerns derived from their gender. As a result, both the diversity and the commonality of women's experience, knowledge, vision and hopes constitute a source of strength and the basis for believing that the mission of this Platform for Action can be achieved.

III. CRITICAL AREAS OF CONCERN

A. Inequality between men and women in the sharing of power and decision-making at all levels

10. More women are serving as heads of State or Government, ministers, members of parliament, mayors and members of city councils than ever before. Yet, women still lack equal access to power structures that shape society. In a period of increasing democratization, women make up at least half of the voters in almost all countries, and have had the right to vote and hold office for more than a generation. Yet, they are not full participants in the public choices that affect their lives. All but a few countries are far from achieving the target set by the Economic and Social Council of 30 per cent women in decision-making levels by 1995. Nor do women participate fully in the leadership of international organizations, as top-level diplomats, in transnational

corporations and banks, in the military, the police or in peace-keeping. Yet, without women's full participation, democracy cannot be achieved or maintained. Experience has shown that women can make a difference by casting their votes and affecting the outcomes of electoral processes for change.

11. The continuing gap between women's de jure equality and the reality of women's lives and exclusion from power comes from many sources, and societies differ greatly. For example, in most countries, the norms and practices of political activity suit male lifestyles more than women's. Women often have had little opportunity to compete fairly for leadership positions. Negative stereotypes have discouraged some women from such roles.

12. Inequality in the public arena is often matched by, and often starts with, inequality within the household. Yet, in some societies there have been gains in domestic partnership and role-sharing. Experience has shown that measures can be taken to increase power-sharing in the home, where children first witness gender relations.

B. Insufficient mechanisms at all levels to promote the advancement of women

13. Effective mechanisms are needed at the international, regional, national and community levels to serve as catalysts for promoting the advancement of women. In most countries, the mechanisms established do not have the capacity in terms of financial and human resources to perform this function successfully.

14. National machineries for the advancement of women have been created in almost every country of the world. Diverse in form, they provide a tool for the advancement of women through advocacy, monitoring of public policies and mobilizing support. Women's organizations, including grass-roots women's groups, professional associations, women's networks and other non-governmental organizations, have demonstrated success in effectively and forcefully mobilizing women, especially at the community level, in both rural and urban areas.

15. While there has been an improvement in the development and use of statistics and indicators disaggregated by sex, their coverage is by no means complete. The availability of this information can provide the base for compelling analysis of gender aspects, leading to action.

16. However, these national machineries are often marginalized in national government structures; they are understaffed and under-funded, and are often unable to mobilize the information and clout necessary for advocacy and monitoring, or for linking with grass-roots organizations. At the international level, mechanisms to promote the advancement of women, as part of mainstream political, developmental or human rights activities, experience the same problems as national machineries.

17. Without strong and powerful women's institutions at all levels, mainstreaming women's concerns in public policies and programmes will be ineffective. Without sources of information about the gender-specific impacts

of public actions, programmes are weakened. Without a focus for mobilizing the efforts of grass-roots organizations, their efforts can be dissipated.

18. Experience in many countries shows that strong national machinery, complemented by institutions at the community level, can accelerate the process of change for women. The existence of strong and active women's organizations provides a basis for reaching out from international, national and community levels to mobilize women for change.

C. Lack of awareness of, and commitment to, internationally and nationally recognized women's human rights

19. International standards to prevent discrimination against women are in place. The World Conference on Human Rights emphasized that women's rights were an integral part of the mainstream of universal, inalienable and indivisible human rights. However, unless these standards are fully applied, interpreted and enforced in civil, penal and commercial codes and administrative rules and regulations, they will exist only in name. Lack of awareness, as well as means for enjoyment, of these rights are critical obstacles.

20. Recognition of women's human rights is reflected in the fact that over two thirds of the world's States are party to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, including all of the countries in some regions. Indeed, in most countries, steps have been taken to reflect these rights in law. Women are increasingly using the legal system to exercise these rights.

21. However, in the countries that have not become party to the Convention or where serious reservations have been entered, or where national laws have not been changed to conform with international norms, women's de jure equality is not yet secured. In other countries, lack of enforcement of civil, penal and commercial codes or administrative rules and regulations means that the enjoyment of women of their rights is far less than that of men.

22. The gap between having rights and enjoying them derives in part from a lack of knowledge by women and men alike about those rights and a lack of commitment by Governments to enforce them. It also results from unresponsive legal systems, overly complex administrative procedures, insensitive judicial personnel and inadequate monitoring of the violation of the human rights of women. There is a lack of appropriate recourse mechanisms at the national and international levels. Inadequate resources for institutions monitoring the violation of the human rights of women at the international level, such as the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, compounds the problem.

23. Experience in many countries has shown that women can be mobilized around the struggle to enjoy their rights, regardless of level of education or socio-economic status. Legal literacy programmes have been shown to be effective in helping women understand the link between their rights and other aspects of their lives and in demonstrating that cost-effective institutions can be created to help women obtain those rights.

D. The persistent and growing burden of poverty on women

24. The heavy burdens of poverty generally fall disproportionately on women because women are less likely to have sufficient access to the economic and other resources necessary to improve their lives. The number of rural women living in absolute poverty is increasing at a faster rate than for men and the proportion of women among the poor is growing in all societies.

25. There has been little progress in eradicating the worst forms of poverty over the past 10 years. The effects of prolonged global economic recession, combined with adjustment programmes that have undermined the capacity of Governments to provide for the basic needs of their populations, have also undermined anti-poverty initiatives. This situation, coupled with civil strife in many parts of the world, has resulted in an overall increase in the proportion of households living in poverty and in the number of people in absolute poverty.

26. Poverty affects households as a whole, but within them women bear a disproportionate share of the burden. Women experience poverty differently from men because of differences in their entitlement and responsibility. Women must manage household consumption under situations of increasing scarcity or obtain remunerated employment in low-paid jobs or in the informal sector, and, in so doing, they make the invisible adjustment necessary to cope with poverty.

27. There has been a significant increase in the number of female-headed households, the majority of which are poor, with dependants young and old. Lacking education, health and other support services, and not having access to economic resources, these poor women confront significant obstacles to improving their situation. If they are unable to emerge from poverty, the cycle tends to be perpetuated through their children. In the absence of programmes to attenuate the effects of poverty, these families are likely to remain among the poorest of the poor.

28. Experience has shown that public policies and private initiatives that take account of women's skills and potential by providing the resources and opportunities they need to bring themselves out of poverty can help provide a basis for national economic growth with equity.

E. Inequality in women's access to and participation in the definition of economic structures and policies and the productive process itself

29. Women lack equal access to, and control over, land, capital, technology and other means of production owing to the predominant division of labour between men and women in most societies. Consequently, women have been largely excluded from the shaping of economic structures and policies. At the same time, women's labour, which has contributed significantly to economic development, has generally been underpaid, undervalued and unrecognized.

30. Women have always contributed to national economies. They are the primary producers of food, constitute an increasing proportion of the economically

active population, provide the skilled labour for economic sectors showing the fastest growth, and are increasingly the owners and managers of small and medium-sized enterprises.

31. However, women are infrequently part of the process of decision-making about economic structures and policies, either nationally or internationally, and are not well-represented in financial and other key economic institutions. In large enterprises, whether public or private, they are largely absent at management levels. Women tend to be segregated in a limited number of occupations, where pay is lower than for equivalent work by men. The value of their unremunerated contribution to the economy, whether in family enterprises or in domestic work, is unrecognized and not reflected in national accounts.

32. In most of the world, business has been considered a male preserve, reinforced by stereotypes and discriminatory practices. Women have lacked access to critical economic factors such as ownership of land, credit and training in technology. Women's opportunities have been limited by discriminatory laws, inadequate education and training, inadequate sharing of domestic responsibilities, including child care, and inflexible working environments. The skills women have obtained as a result of their experience in household management, working in the informal sector and in the community has not been valued. Women doing remunerated work have largely been relegated to low-paying, low-prestige jobs and to the unregulated informal sector where exploitation is often easy.

33. Experience has shown that when women are given access to credit they apply it effectively. Given access to resources, technology and training, women can take the lead in expanding production. Women's skills at performing many tasks simultaneously, their discipline and their ability to adjust to new situations constitute a major underutilized resource for development which can be released if economic structures and policies can be made responsive to them.

F. Inequality in access to education, health and related services and means of maximizing the use of women's capacities

34. Education is a key to development, but despite this the educational opportunities offered to women have often contributed to reinforcing traditional female roles, denying them full partnership in society. There is growing awareness that educating women has a major impact on social change and is a worthwhile investment. Such education must be responsive to the practical needs of women and include training in science and technology and modern communications. Education is a necessary tool for women to continue to be agents of change.

35. In most regions of the world, girls and boys now have the same access to primary and secondary education and, in some regions, equality in enrolment is being achieved in tertiary education. Despite this, almost a billion people, two thirds of them women, are still illiterate and the benefits of more equal access to education will not be felt for some time. In other regions, girls still suffer discrimination in access to education and training and reductions

in spending on education and health services as a result of structural adjustment.

36. For girls entering school, the fundamental question is whether they will receive quality education that will prepare them to enter any field, expose them to science and technology, stimulate their creativity, and build up their self-esteem, and that is structured to keep them from dropping out prematurely. For adult women, the challenge is to provide education and training that is cost-effective and can help them overcome the consequences of past discrimination which often left them lacking in essential skills. Experience in many countries has shown that investment in education of women and girls pays significant dividends in economic growth, improved health and quality of life for women and men alike.

37. Progress has also been made in making primary health care available, and new technologies make the prevention and treatment of many medical problems more feasible than ever before. However, reductions in spending on health services as a result of structural adjustment has halted progress in providing needed services in many countries. Lack of treatment of health problems primarily affecting women place women as a group at risk. When combined with lack of family-planning and other health-related services, the inadequate situation is reflected in high rates of maternal mortality, malnutrition, anaemia and too early and too frequent pregnancies.

38. To this is added the scourge of HIV/AIDS, which is affecting women at an increasing rate along with newborns. Women are often not able to insist on safe sex practices and have little access to information on prevention. The consequences of HIV/AIDS reach beyond women's health to their role as caretakers of the sick and destitute. The social, developmental and health consequences of AIDS need to be seen through a gender perspective, but this is not always the case.

39. Society has much to gain from investments in education, health, family planning and child- and dependant-care services, for they are investments in the future of both women and men. Experience has shown that when such services are available, women are able to contribute their creativity and skills to the public good.

G. Violence against women

40. Violence against women is a global problem. It takes various forms in both public and private life, and has been recognized as a violation of basic human rights, instilling fear and insecurity in women's lives.

41. Violence against women derives essentially from the lower status accorded to women in the family and in society. Physical, psychological or sexual violence, whether occurring in the home or in society, is linked to male power, privilege and control. It is abetted by ignorance, lack of laws to prohibit violence, inadequate efforts by public authorities to enforce existing laws, and absence of educational and other means to address its causes. The absence of

adequate statistics about incidence make elaboration of programmes and monitoring of changes difficult.

42. Violence against women has entered public debate and is now condemned as a violation of the human rights of women. It is a growing concern of men and women alike and has been condemned internationally in the Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women, in general recommendations 12 and 19 of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women and by other international bodies.

43. Experience in a number of countries shows that women and men can be mobilized to fight against violence in all its forms and that effective public measures can be taken to address both the consequences and the causes of violence.

H. Effects of armed or other kinds of conflict on women

44. Women seldom perpetrate national and international armed and other kinds of conflict, and are almost never involved in the decisions leading to such conflict. Nevertheless, they bear a disproportionate share of the consequences of these conflicts, and conflict resolution at this level has remained largely a male domain.

45. Everyone caught up in armed conflicts is affected, but women are affected in particular ways, largely as a reflection of their status in society. They are seldom combatants themselves, lack protection and are often left with the responsibility of maintaining families when conflict disrupts or destroys social and economic life. They have been victims of such practices as torture, disappearance and systematic rape as a weapon of war. Women are disproportionately represented, with their children, among refugees and displaced persons. They are subject to violence or threats of violence or sexual abuse.

46. There is little evidence to confirm whether women in leadership positions would act differently from men in initiating conflict, but there is considerable evidence that women have different approaches to resolving conflict which can be brought to bear both nationally and internationally.

I. Insufficient use of mass media to promote women's positive contributions to society

47. The world is undergoing a communications revolution in which new images and ideas reach into the far corners of the world. New technologies offer the promise of greater interaction among people. These technologies are powerful tools that can be used either for social progress or to reinforce stereotypes.

48. In many countries, the public image of women is changing because of the positive images of women being projected. There are also increasing numbers of women involved in the communications media.

49. On the whole, however, the mass media in most countries still rely on stereotyped images of women and do not provide an accurate picture of women's roles and value in a changing world, but reinforce outdated perceptions of women's roles. Whether public or private, the mass media are still controlled primarily by men and reflect, in many ways, their values and perceptions. These include images of violence and dominance, which have an impact on viewers young and old.

50. Experience in some countries in which efforts have been made to portray women's contributions accurately shows that the mass media can be a significant force for reinforcing change and promoting equality. The possibilities of using communications technology to link women nationally and internationally have been demonstrated in a number of pilot efforts.

J. Lack of adequate recognition and support for women's contribution to managing natural resources and safeguarding the environment

51. Managing natural resources and safeguarding the environment are the responsibilities of everyone, and the consequences of environmental degradation affect everyone as well. Women's deep concern for the quality and sustainability of the natural systems that sustain life is an intimate part of women's lives. This concern takes root in their daily reality, their experience as persons primarily responsible for obtaining fuel and water in much of the world and their role in managing the consumption patterns of the household. It also takes root in their concern for the future generations they bear.

52. The preparations for the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development showed that women were concerned with the environment and had unique experiences that could help develop national and international programmes and policies. This has been reflected in Agenda 21.

53. However, women have been largely absent from decision-making about the environment. The enthusiasm and experience brought by women has not been applied to environmental decision-making and management.

54. In a world of accelerating resource depletion which results in diminished agricultural production, desertification and dislocation, the expertise and knowledge of all is required. Despite the close interaction between the environment and women's daily lives, environmental policies typically have not been formulated with this in mind and technical solutions that have been proposed have not taken this perspective into account. As a result, women have tended to suffer the effects of environmental degradation rather than enabled to bring their perspectives and experience to bear to protect natural resources.

55. Experience in many countries has shown that when women have been involved in environmental management, protection and conservation, they can be a decisive factor in the success of programmes and initiatives.

IV. STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES DERIVED FROM THE CRITICAL AREAS OF CONCERN AND ACTION TO BE TAKEN

56. The critical areas of concern cut across the boundaries of equality, development and peace. They reflect the interdependence of these goals, which were set out for the United Nations Decade for Women. The strategic objectives derived from the critical areas of concern and action to be taken are also cross-cutting. The themes of the United Nations Decade for Women: Equality, Development and Peace require efforts to address both the practical and the strategic needs of women. Action may be taken by the international community, Governments, non-governmental organizations, other community organizations, the private sector and individuals.

[Note by the Secretariat: The elaboration of the action to be taken to achieve the strategic objectives should be done by drawing on, especially, the results of the earlier deliberations of the Commission on priority themes, the discussions during the thirty-eighth session of the Commission and in the Inter-sessional Working Group convened in January 1994, the results of the regional preparatory conferences and additional technical meetings (particularly in terms of the priority themes for the thirty-ninth session of the Commission). The proposals shown under each objective are meant to suggest possible lines of action for the Commission to discuss and to provide guidance to the Secretariat for the next draft Platform for Action.]

A. Strengthening factors that promote the full participation of women in power structures and decision-making at all levels

57. Action by Governments might include adopting specific measures (for example, targets, goals, quotas or other temporary special measures) corresponding to the national tradition, culture and stage of development to ensure women's equal access to power and equal participation in decision-making at all levels, especially at the highest levels, and in non-traditional areas such as finance, security and foreign affairs. It might include adopting special administrative instructions and regulations, creating monitoring mechanisms such as ombudsmen and training of decision makers to ensure equal representation, equal career development opportunities and equal treatment of women in the civil service. It might also involve developing incentives for the private sector in order to encourage entrepreneurs to follow equality principles. It might include appointing women in equal number with men to represent their countries as ambassadors, governmental delegates, commissioners and chief negotiators; and seconding them to political posts in international and regional organizations, including high positions in such areas as peace-keeping and conflict resolution. It could also include collecting and disseminating data on the participation of women in decision-making; using existing forums of education and training to raise awareness of women's discrimination in this area and the necessity for change; combating women's biased image in the media and replacing it with a positive one, focusing on women as full citizens. It could include programmes to encourage women to undertake education and training that is conducive to participation in politics, including decision-making.

58. Action by non-governmental organizations and private institutions might include action to support and sponsor the participation of women in political parties, trade unions and other similar organizations, at all levels, including the decision-making level; to influence political parties to train and encourage women to become candidates in local and national elections and to acquire leadership capacities. It could also include steps to provide information and training enabling women to learn about the political process; to raise public awareness of women's contribution to the public good and society and to enhance the understanding of the need for equal access of women to power; to campaign actively against degrading images and representation of women in the media, as well as prevailing discriminatory practices.

59. Action by the United Nations system might include further action to correct the low representation of women in the United Nations system, in particular at the decision-making level, through preferential recruitment, promotion and other special measures, to increase the proportion of women at all levels so as to achieve equality by the year 2000.

B. Applying and enforcing international norms and standards to safeguard the human rights of women

60. Action by Governments to address this objective might include ratification of, or accession to, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, if they have not done so, limiting the extent of any reservations and reconsidering and removing substantive reservations, in particular those which are contrary to the object and purpose of the Convention, with a view to strengthening it and its effective implementation through the adoption and adjustment of all necessary legislative, administrative and other measures. Further action might include reform of the judicial system to make it more responsive to women, and establishing and strengthening institutions, such as ombudsmen, in order to help women pursue their rights, while recognizing that it is the right of each State to choose the framework that is best suited to its particular needs at the national level. Further action might include supplying pertinent information on the situation of women de jure and de facto in all reports to human rights treaty bodies and widely disseminating information on women's human rights in the national context.

61. Action by non-governmental organizations might include undertaking campaigns to increase women's legal literacy, organizing paralegal assistance programmes and other forms of assistance to women using the judicial system, and undertaking independent monitoring of government compliance with international norms. Further action might include training of trainers in order to facilitate wider dissemination of legal literacy with a gender perspective. Action might also include access to the media by non-governmental organizations in order to create public awareness of women's rights and to publicize women's rights campaigns and legal reforms.

62. Action by organizations of the United Nations system might include improving the servicing of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, and integrating women's concerns into the work of all other human rights mechanisms. Further action might include organizing campaigns for

universal ratification of, and accession to, the Convention and, in consultation with the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, considering opening a dialogue with States that have not yet acceded to the Convention, in order to identify obstacles and to seek ways of overcoming them. Consideration could be given to introducing the right of petition through the preparation of an optional protocol to the Convention to provide for a complaints procedure and to increasing resources to provide for training, advisory services and technical assistance in the implementation of the Convention. Other action might include steps to strengthen coordination between United Nations bodies concerned with the human rights of women.

C. Promoting women's economic self-reliance, including access to and control over economic resources - land, capital and technology

63. Action by Governments to address this objective might include revising legislation as well as administrative rules and procedures to ensure equal opportunities for working women and men, to promote safer working conditions, to guarantee availability of child-care centres and crêches for mothers and fathers in the formal and informal sectors, to guarantee equal pay for work of equal value, to avoid the bias towards the feminization of part-time work, and to promote self-employment as well as technical training in new fields and guidance among unemployed young women. It could include development of government programmes to provide accessible credit to women as well as facilitation of marketing of products.

64. Action by non-governmental organizations, including the private sector and trade unions, might include supporting women in choosing non-traditional professions, encouraging women towards leadership positions, monitoring recruitment, training and promotion bodies and procedures, and promoting rules to prevent sexual harassment at work. It could include organizing entrepreneurial training and self-help financial institutions, such as cooperatives.

65. Action by organizations of the United Nations system might include promoting the exchange of information on successful policies and programmes and producing technical material on how to change discriminatory practices. It might also include further efforts to build gender factors into development assistance, including lending, technology transfer and technical cooperation.

D. Eliminating the factors that accentuate poverty among women and prevent them from overcoming the circumstances that keep them in that situation

66. Action by Governments, non-governmental organizations and organizations of the United Nations system alike might include policy statements that recognize that the experience of poverty and the consequences of poverty are different for women and men and incorporate this in the design and implementation of poverty alleviation policies and programmes. Development professionals could be trained in that respect, including the need to take into account the varying

compositions, structures and dynamics of households. Special measures could be directed towards female-headed households. Quantitative and qualitative indicators could be developed to assess the magnitude and severity of poverty among women, including gender-sensitive indicators in household income and expenditure surveys, information on women's informal work and women's time use, returns to labour and poverty differentials by age.

67. Governments might enact laws that remove barriers to the economic participation of poor women, particularly as they relate to property rights, asset holding, inheritance laws, credit policies, and labour and zoning laws. Financial institutions could develop programmes to reach out to low-income women entrepreneurs and producers in rural and urban areas. They could enforce, to the extent possible, minimum wage legislation, occupational safety measures and social security. They might recognize the importance of the informal sector, which is a major source of economic activity for women in both rural and urban areas. Women in the informal sector could be assisted in getting access to markets, credit and training, especially in entrepreneurship. They might establish or improve retraining schemes, providing equal access for women, and provide incentives for poor parents to educate girls and for women to enter non-traditional occupations. They might take steps to involve poor women in the design of programmes intended to benefit them.

68. Action by non-governmental organizations might include promoting self-help organizations at the grass-roots level, including community-based day care and training.

69. Action by organizations of the United Nations system might include analysing and publicizing programmes that have had success in addressing poverty and undertaking analyses of the impact on women's poverty of development programmes and projects.

E. Ensuring women's access to quality education and training for self-reliance

70. Action by Governments might include making the necessary expenditure so that all girls can be enrolled in and complete primary education on the same basis as boys. Reform of educational curricula could be adopted to ensure that education is gender-neutral, and gender awareness should be integrated into all aspects of teacher-training programmes to eliminate gender stereotyping. Basic literacy and functional literacy programmes should be made available to all women and girls, and positive action taken to promote women's interest in scientific and technical education, encouraging women to enter non-traditional fields.

71. Action by non-governmental organizations might include monitoring the extent to which educational reforms favouring gender equity are implemented. It might also include activities such as community-based informal training in functional literacy, civic education and income-generating skills for adult women.

72. Action by organizations of the United Nations system might include gender-awareness programmes for all officers engaged in designing and implementing non-formal education and training and an increase in the proportion of women fieldworkers and those engaged in rural extension programmes. Development assistance could be given by agencies to the production of training resources and programmes that meet gender-sensitive criteria. Agencies should also ensure that positions for internships and trainee programmes are filled by equal numbers of women and men.

F. Increasing women's full access throughout the life cycle to health and related services

73. Action by Governments to address this objective might include providing adequate financing to ensure the availability of primary health services to all by the year 2000, with a review of women's health needs in establishing programmes. Steps might be taken to provide universal family-planning services, as well as accessible information available in the area of sexual health, particularly measures to prevent the spread of HIV/AIDS among women. Measures might also be taken to ensure that free health educational materials and health services are available in all educational institutions.

74. Action by non-governmental organizations might include non-formal health education and advisory services for women and girls at the community level, giving particular emphasis to women's traditional health knowledge and providing outreach to the urban poor and rural women who do not have access to government services.

75. Action by organizations of the United Nations system might include an increase in the proportion of assistance in the area of health, which has recently stagnated, with particular focus on the health of women and girls and by promoting the training of more female health workers.

G. Eliminating violence against women

76. Action by Governments to address this objective could include reviewing existing legislation with a view to making necessary changes to deal with violence, including such action as finding appropriate sanctions for domestic violence. It could provide training and orientation to police and judicial personnel, doctors, family-planning social workers, nurses and others to recognize abuses perpetrated against women. It could include providing support to shelters and other measures to address the consequences of violence. It could also involve developing national strategies to address the causes of violence through the education system and the mass media. It could include integrated data collection on violence against women in all fields.

77. Action by non-governmental organizations might include organizing shelters and support groups and undertaking campaigns against violence. They could analyse proposed legislation and use the findings to mobilize public opinion about the proposals. They could provide legal assistance for women confronting violence.

78. Action by organizations of the United Nations system might include supporting the work of the Special Rapporteur on violence against women, and monitoring the implementation of the Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women, including statistics and indicators on violence. It could include evaluating the impact of violence against women on society, as well as its cost on human and monetary resources. It could include monitoring the follow-up to policies and practices to address discrimination against women, sexual harassment and other gender-based violence by United Nations system personnel.

H. Increasing the participation of women in conflict resolution and protecting women in international armed and other kinds of conflict

79. Action by Governments to address this objective could include involving an equal proportion of women in peace negotiations and conflict resolution. It could include redirecting possible savings from defense budgets to development. It might involve reflecting in legislation the right to political asylum of women persecuted on the grounds of gender or those whose human rights have been violated either in times of peace or war. It could include consideration of war-related violence against women, such as mass rapes, forced pregnancies and other gender-specific abuses applied as a means of warfare, as war crimes and crimes against humanity and treat them accordingly by proper national and international institutions. It might include steps to incorporate peace education and teaching about non-violent measures of conflict resolution into school curricula, presenting them from the gender perspective, in the context of discussion on peace and democratization.

80. Action by non-governmental organizations might include publicizing information on women's contribution to peace, peace education, conflict resolution, justice and democracy, bringing its relevance for decision-making to the attention of decision makers and public opinion, recording and publishing the history of women's contribution to peace, social reconstruction and peace research. It could include supporting women peace educators and peace researchers, and encouraging women to become involved in grass-roots activities related to peace and resolution of conflicts or to choose them as a profession. It could also include campaigns to encourage women and men to serve as informal educators in bringing up young people in an atmosphere of compassion, tolerance, mutual concern and trust.

81. Action by organizations of the United Nations system might include collecting and disseminating data on the participation of women in national and international military service, including peace-keeping and humanitarian operations, and studying those data with a view to eliminating gender stereotyping. It could include steps to set an example of using men and women together without discrimination in peace-keeping operations and to make training in peace-keeping available to women. This could involve applying, at the civilian level, norms of equality in recruitment, selection and assignment, and at the military operations level, of encouraging Governments to include women in their national contingents. It might involve training military and civilian peace-keeping forces to observe the human rights of women and to follow gender-

sensitive rules of conduct, for which standards should be elaborated. Other action could include a women-in-development approach in all humanitarian assistance and peace-keeping operations, examining and addressing the needs of refugee women, providing those women with adequate assistance, and, in the case of refugee women, monitoring the process of their settlement in the receiving countries and/or their return to their home countries.

I. Mobilizing information so as to integrate gender considerations into policy and programme planning and implementation at all levels

82. Action by Governments to address this objective might include routinely collecting statistics and indicators disaggregated by sex, and strengthening national machinery for the advancement of women by locating it in a critical location in national policy-making where it can monitor the extent to which gender considerations are taken into account in government policies and programmes. It could include training government officials in gender analysis.

83. Action by non-governmental organizations might include monitoring national policies and programmes for the extent to which gender considerations have been taken into account, assisting women who have been negatively affected by programmes to make this known and to obtain relief.

84. Action by organizations of the United Nations system might include promoting the global collection and dissemination of statistics and indicators disaggregated by sex, and developing new indicators, especially in the context of the system of national accounts, using gender analysis in the development of programmes in financial and other development institutions. It might involve strengthening networks of focal points as well as main institutions for gender analysis.

J. Using the communications media effectively to promote equality between women and men

85. Action by Governments to address this objective might include providing access to the mass media to women and women's groups, and establishing bodies to monitor standards in terms of content and then taking steps to regulate communications that are derogatory to women. Provision could be made for women and women's groups to have equal access to telecommunications, computer and other information technology and training.

86. Action by non-governmental organizations might include the development of communications networks to link women's groups, as well as the establishment of media watch organizations and strategies to withdraw support from advertisers who continue to support unfavourable portrayals of women.

87. Action by organizations of the United Nations system might include the development of international guidelines for gender equity in the media, both in employment policies and in programming.

K. Promoting action to develop the mutual responsibility of women and men to achieve equality

88. Action by Governments might include promoting the sharing of family responsibilities, creating incentives such as flexible working hours for the sharing of parental responsibilities by women and men to reduce the preponderance of men in productive activities and of women in reproductive activities, including decision-making regarding family size and child-spacing. Measures could be taken to improve communication between men and women and the understanding of their respective and joint responsibilities so that women and men are seen as equal partners in public and private life.

89. Action by non-governmental organizations might include development of special programmes that focus on young people and their development of greater understanding of and sensitivity to gender issues.

90. Action by the United Nations system could include examining existing personnel policies and practices to ensure that they provide support to women in reconciling their family and work responsibilities.

V. FINANCIAL ARRANGEMENTS

91. Implementation of the Platform for Action will need appropriate financing. Previous efforts to achieve global and national objectives for the advancement of women have always assumed that resources would be made available. Experience shows that this has seldom been the case. This section should outline in detail the resource requirements necessary to implement the proposed action at all levels and propose ways to make these resources available, including through reallocation of resources to women. It should set targets and suggest sources of funding. It should show the relationship of these resources to broader objectives, demonstrating how investment in achieving the goals of the Nairobi Forward-looking Strategies for the Advancement of Women can have multiplier effects on other goals.

VI. INSTITUTIONAL ARRANGEMENTS FOR IMPLEMENTATION AND MONITORING OF THE PLATFORM FOR ACTION

92. This section should discuss the types of institutional arrangements at the national, regional and global levels that can ensure the effective implementation and monitoring of the Platform for Action to ensure full accountability for its implementation. Emphasis should be given, for example, to strengthening technical and financial cooperation, to ensuring gender-sensitive planning and policy-making, and to mainstreaming women's issues further in programme planning and implementation. Institutional arrangements could be proposed to ensure cooperation and networking to increase awareness and promote joint activities for the advancement of women, including monitoring at all levels. At the global level, in particular, it should consider the type of coordination, research and advocacy arrangements that have the greatest promise for reinforcing national action and implementing international norms and standards.